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ANCIENT  
BIOGRAPHICAL POEMS,

ON

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK,  
VISCOUNT HEREFORD, THE EARLS OF ESSEX,  
AND QUEEN ELIZABETH.

FROM GOUGH'S NORFOLK MSS. IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY.

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EDITED BY  
J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE execution of the Duke of Norfolk, on the 2nd June, 1572, excited an extraordinary sensation throughout England. Camden was present both at his trial and decapitation, and says of him, "It is incredible how dearly the people loved him, whose good will he had gained by a munificence and extraordinary affability suitable to so great a prince. The wiser sort of men were variously affected: some were terrified at the greatness of the danger which, during his life, seemed to threaten the State from him and his faction; others were moved with pity towards him, as one very nobly descended, of an extraordinary good nature, comely personage, and manly presence; who might have been both a support and ornament to his country, had not the crafty wiles of the envious, and his own false hopes, led on with a show of doing the public service, diverted him from his first course of life. They called likewise to mind his father's untimely end, who, though a man of extraordinary learning, and famous in war, was yet beheaded in the same place five and twenty years before, and that upon very slight grounds: viz. for quartering the arms of Edward the Confessor with his own; which yet we read that the Mowbrays, Dukes of Norfolk, from whom he descended, had borne by permission of King Richard II."—(Life of Eliz. A.D. 1572.)



All the facts connected with this catastrophe, and with another, of a similar character, which happened about thirty years afterwards, are well known as matters of history, so that it will not be necessary for us even to touch upon them; but it is fit to say something by way of introduction to the following Poems, recommended to our notice rather by their public than by their literary importance.

It is known that ballads, and probably other productions in verse, were published soon after the death of the Duke of Norfolk; but either they have been destroyed by the lapse of time, or they were suppressed by authority of the State, and no such printed specimens have descended to our day.

The two pieces which stand first in the ensuing pages are, like the rest, derived from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library (Gough's Norfolk Papers, No. 43), which has hitherto attracted no attention, having eluded the researches of Ritson, and of all other poetical antiquaries. If they were ever printed, which is doubtful, it must have happened very shortly after the event to which they relate. It is not stated in the manuscript (which seems to have been compiled by a Suffolk gentleman of the name of Thomas Brampton) that they were copied from any originals, whether in type or otherwise; and they are so mixed up with poems and scraps upon other topics, and of an entirely different character, that it is impossible to say positively, whether they may not have been the authorship of the individual in whose handwriting they have come down to us. Our main reason for thinking that they were not of his composition is, that they appear to be so full of corruptions, that we cannot suppose the writer himself guilty of them. These mistakes we have not attempted to set right: some few errors may be said to correct themselves, but the

rest may be thought to defy conjecture and ingenuity, and we have preferred to present them to our readers in the precise form they bear in the only (as far as we are yet informed) existing authority. To one of the miscellaneous poems in the volume we find the name of the writer appended, with the date of 1594, and, as he was then certainly not a young man, we may conclude that he was living at the date of the Duke of Norfolk's death. The poem which bears his signature is a moral and didactic production, such as a person considerably advanced in life would write; and, as it is short, we subjoin it by way of illustration, for the purpose of directing more particularly the attention of our readers to the name, and of inducing them to supply hereafter any biographical particulars within their knowledge.

A p'fect patterne of true felicitie framed to fynde the waye to eternitie.

What wisdome more, what better liffe than pleaseth god to sende,  
 What worldly gooddes, what longer use than pleaseth god to lende,  
 What better fare than well content, what mirth to quiet wellth,  
 What better guest than trustie friende in sicknes or in hellth,  
 What better bedd than quiet rest to pas the night w<sup>th</sup> slepe,  
 What better worke then dayly care thyself fro' sinne to kepe,  
 What better thought then thinke of god, and dayly him to serve,  
 What better gifte than to the pore that readie be to s[t]erve,  
 What better praise to god or man then hatred to forsake,  
 What merciles shall m'cie gett yt m'cie none will take,  
 What worse dispayre than loth to die for feare to goe to hell,  
 What greater faith then trust in god by Christ in Heaven to dwell ?

P' me, THOMAS BRAMPTON, 1594.

If the registers of the Company of Stationers were complete, we feel confident that we should have there found some entries relating to ballads and other productions, published or intended to

be published, in order that the authors and booksellers might take advantage of the temporary interest excited by the execution of so popular a nobleman as the Duke of Norfolk. Most unluckily the volume, belonging to the period between July 1571 and July 1576, has been for many years missing, (possibly from the time of the fire of London,) so that no information can be obtained from this source. How long a tune, to which one of the ballads was sung, was applied to the same purpose may be judged from the fact, that in vol. iii. p. 70, of "Poems on Affairs of State, from 1640 to this present year 1704," is "A new ballad to an old tune, called *I am the Duke of Norfolk*, &c." We may be pretty sure, therefore, that this effusion began with the words "I am the Duke of Norfolk," and if it exist, either in print or in manuscript, in any public or private depository, it may thus be recognised. The measure of the ballad was, perhaps, the same as the performance written to the same tune and printed in "Poems on Affairs of State," where the first stanza runs thus:—

"I am a senseless thing, with a hey, with a hey :  
Men call me King, with a ho ;  
To my luxury and ease,  
They brought me o'er the seas,  
With a hey, tronny, nonny, nonny, no!"

The above was, of course, composed in ridicule of Charles II., in whose reign the old ballad on the death of the Duke of Norfolk was probably, in some form, still extant; but it is not easy to imagine in what way a tune with such a burden could have been rendered lamentable instead of ludicrous.

In Murdin's "State Papers," Sir Henry Ellis's "Letters," Bayley's "History of the Tower," Smith's "Historical and Literary



Curiosities," and in some other works, may be seen prose compositions by the Duke of Norfolk, chiefly consisting of appeals to the Queen, of epistles to his children, and of notes to his friends, all written while he was a prisoner in the Tower, almost in daily expectation of the execution of the sentence, passed upon him on the 16th Jan., and not put in force, as we have already stated, until 2nd June, 1572. The writer of the present notice has a MS. (once belonging to Sir Christopher Hatton, and with his autograph upon the covers), containing four addresses by the Duke of Norfolk, then under sentence of death, to different parties: three of these have been printed, with more or less imperfectness, but the fourth, a very long and highly interesting letter to his son, the Earl of Arundel (who was afterwards for many years a prisoner in the same fortress where his father and grandfather had been confined), has never been printed: in it the Duke warns his son Philip not to pursue the very course which finally led to his ruin.\*

Only the two earliest of the ensuing pieces relate to the Duke of Norfolk: the one is composed in the person of the noble sufferer, and professes, if not to justify, to excuse, his crime, especially as regards any design upon the Queen of Scots. It was evidently written by a friend—we cannot impute it to the Duke himself—but it is followed by an "Answer," composed by some enemy, in the form of a parody, and intended, as far as possible, to inculcate the personage,

\* Thomas Brampton, the compiler of the MS. in Gough's collection, may have been some retainer in the family of the Duke of Norfolk, and this fact would account for the number of papers referring to him copied into it. We there find the Duke's arraignment at full, with some of his speeches on his trial, together with all the articles alleged against him, and his answers to them. It also contains a transcript of his supplication to the Queen; but one of the most interesting documents inserted is a list of all the prisoners in the Tower at the period when Mary ascended the throne, with the precise sums they

who by many was considered the victim of the intrigues of the Bishop of Ross. We give both exactly as they appear in the MS., excepting that, consistently with the more usual practice, we have made all the lines begin with capitals.

paid weekly to Sir Edward Warner, then Constable, for their board, servants, coals, wood, and candles.

The Duke of Norfolk (father of the Earl of Surrey, who was father of the Duke, beheaded in 1572) paid *5l. 14s. 8d.* per week for himself and one servant.

The Duchess of Somerset (widow of the Protector of Edward VI.) was allowed three gentlewomen, and as many male servants, and paid *8l.* per week.

The Duke of Suffolk (Henry Grey, father of Lady Jane) had two servants to attend him, and paid *6l. 6s. 8d.* per week.

The Duke of Northumberland (John Dudley) was allowed three servants, and paid *6l. 13s. 4d.* per week.

The Marquess of Northampton (William Parr, brother of Queen Katherine), with two servants, paid *5l. 10s.* per week.

	£	s.	d.	
The Bishop of Winchester paid . . . . .	1	0	0	per week.
Mr. Courtenay . . . . .	1	17	8	" "
The Earl of Huntingdon . . . . .	4	10	0	" "
The Earl of Warwick . . . . .	4	10	0	" "
The Lord Ambrose . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Lord Robert Dudley . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Lord Guildford . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Lord Henry . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Sir Andrew Dudley . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Justice Mountague . . . . .	2	13	4	" "
Justice Chamley . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Sir John Gates . . . . .	3	16	8	" "
Sir John Cheke . . . . .	2	3	4	" "
Sir Henry Gate . . . . .	2	3	4	" "
Sir Thomas Palmer . . . . .	2	1	8	" "
Sir Richard Corbet . . . . .	1	15	0	" "
Rowland Dye . . . . .	1	1	8	" "
Edwin Sandes . . . . .	0	16	8	" "
James Ingram . . . . .	0	13	4	" "
Six poor prisoners at <i>7s. 6d.</i> each . . . . .	2	5	0	" "

The name of Lady Jane Grey is also included in the list, but she stands separately, and was allowed two gentlewomen and two men servants to attend her, for which, with coals, wood, and candle, she paid *6l. 6s. 8d.* per week—the same sum as her father.

To these productions we have appended four other pieces in verse, of a personal character, all derived from the same manuscript, and relating to different distinguished individuals. Like the others, they have, with one exception, little poetical merit, but deserve preservation and publicity on biographical considerations. The earliest of these belongs to the year 1558, and is a species of funeral eulogy on Walter Devereux, Baron Ferrers of Chartley, who had been created Viscount Hereford on 2nd February, 1550: he was grandfather to the Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, who died in Ireland in 1576, and great-grandfather to Queen Elizabeth's favourite, executed in 1600-1, of both of whom we shall have occasion to speak again presently. This production, headed "An Epitaph of the Death of the Viscount Hereford," highly extols his public services, which were so considerable, especially as a naval commander, that he was made Knight of the Garter in 1523. We are not aware of the existence of any other mention of him in verse, and the performance here inserted has never before been alluded to.

Walter Devereux, his grandson (son of Sir Richard Devereux, who died during the life of his father), having succeeded to the title of Viscount Hereford in 1558, was created Earl of Essex in 1572: he was also Knight of the Garter, and being employed unsuccessfully in Ireland, he died in Dublin in 1576. "A godly and virtuous Song," extant in Sloane MS. 1898, is imputed to him; and the poem entitled "The Song of the right noble Earl of Essex," which follows the "epitaph" on his grandfather, is in the first person, and has been treated as his authorship. On the other hand, it is found in the various editions of the "Paradise of Dainty Devices," where the initials of F. K. (Francis Kynwelmersh) are appended to it, and

the probability certainly is that that poet wrote it.\* There is a copy of it in MS. in the library of the Earl of Ellesmere, which agrees pretty nearly with the "Paradise of Dainty Devices," excepting that the initials of the real, or supposed, author are omitted. We now publish it as it stands in the Gough MS. at Oxford, and it will be remarked on comparison that it differs, although not very materially, from any other known transcript.†

The poem called "The Robin," from the same source, refers covertly to Robert Earl of Essex, who came to the title, on the

\* It bears the title merely of "The Complaint of a Synner" in the first impression of 1576, and subsequently in the various reprints of that early miscellany; so that it is not there at all connected with the death of Walter Earl of Essex.

† In Vol. II. of the "Extracts from the Registers of the Stationers' Company," printed by the Shakespeare Society, will be seen (p. 35) a much superior production on the demise of Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, in 1576. It consists of nine stanzas, and is an extremely creditable poem for the time when it was written, and, we may suppose, published, although no printed copy of it is now known. In the entry of it in the book of the Stationers' Company Walter Earl of Essex is styled, by miswriting or ignorance on the part of the clerk, "Viscount *hereof*," instead of Viscount Hereford. The first stanza, which we quote by way of specimen, runs thus:—

" Lament, lament, for he is dead,  
Who served his prince most faithfully;  
Lament each subject, and the head  
Of this our realm of Brittainy.  
Our Queen has lost a soldier true,  
Her subjects lost a noble friend;  
Oft for his queen his sword he drew,  
And for her subjects blood did spend."

We may add here, in order to account for the appearance in Brampton's MS. of the poems on the three different members of the Devereux family, that he was in some way connected with the grandmother of Robert Earl of Essex. This connection is apparent from the copy of a bond (which Brampton inserts), by which he engaged for the payment of 250*l.* for her. Thomas Brampton describes himself of Kenton, but his father, William Brampton, was of Letton, and was lord of the manor of Attilborough. Thomas Brampton had, as he states, four children: viz. Thomas, born in 1590; Anne in 1594; Elizabeth in 1596; and Mary in 1603.

death of his father Walter, in 1576. He was executed on 25th Feb. 1600-1; but the production under consideration must have been penned by one of his friends or adherents, while he was in possession of the warmest regards of the Queen. She was in the habit of familiarly calling him her "Robin,"\* and upon that point, and in praise of the habits and qualities of the bird, the production is founded: it must have possessed in its perfect state (as we may judge from the obviously mutilated copy before us) no little spirit and elegance. The playful manner in which it touches upon the private favours bestowed upon the Earl, his familiarity at Court, his hopping, like a Robin, about the royal bed, while rivals were excluded, and other particulars, render this production far more than usually attractive. As we have never seen any other transcript of it, we have no means of correcting its errors, and it is much easier to detect the mistakes of the scribe, than to amend them.

Corruptions are still more abundant, and in some respects of a graver kind, in the lively verses on Queen Elizabeth and her manifold perfections and accomplishments, which conclude our quotations from the Gough manuscript. There are few of the proper names which are not blunderingly spelled, and most of them must have been written, not only by ear, but by a very ignorant ear. In this respect it would not have been difficult to have set matters right; but, inasmuch as the task would have been easy, it would be needless, and we have preferred to print these verses precisely as they stand in the only copy of them with which we are ac-

\* Elizabeth had previously bestowed the nickname of Robin upon Robert Earl of Leicester, whom she also designated, especially in her letters, as "Eyes," in consequence of the known beauty of that feature in her favourite.



quainted. It is clear that they were written while the Queen was on the throne, and no doubt by some courtier, or poet (perhaps both courtier and poet), who was anxious to ingratiate himself by the flattering attributes he heaped upon her Majesty.

To the continued kindness of Dr. Bandinel the Editor owes the opportunity of collating the poems ; and it is due to Mr. J. Markham Thorpe to add that we are indebted to him for first directing our attention to them, and for making the transcripts of which we have availed ourselves.

J. P. C.

ANCIENT

BIOGRAPHICAL POEMS.

---

VERSES SET FORTHIE IN THE FAVER OF THE DUKE OF NORFOLK HIS  
CAUSES.

If former good coulde answer presentc yll,  
And often well might mende but onse amysse,  
My lief, forepaste in truthe and dutie still,  
Might salve this faulte for w<sup>ch</sup> my troble is.

O happie theye that quyte their princes soo !  
But thus w<sup>th</sup> me, O wretched man ! it frames;  
For often well I unrewarded goo,  
And for oon evell receyve ten thousand blames.

Is this my happe, or justice due for synne ?  
If bothe, to fault and to my fate yelde I:  
Myne owne good dedes and juste desertes therin  
I leave, and to my God and quene I flic ;  
And mercye crave for all [my] synnes unsene,  
Prostrate w<sup>th</sup> teares bifore my God and quene:

A heape of synnes I must confesse to God,  
 Gaynste whom bycawse I have don most amysse,  
 I will receive his juste deservedd rodde;  
 But to my quene my only faulte is this:—

I did advise a quene unfortunate,  
 To yelde her will unto my prynces here;  
 Whom axt, I thoughte to pitie her estate,  
 A frynde by kynde, a quene, a neighbor nere.

But I sought not, agaynst my mistres will,  
 To steale by slayte ought of her highnes hands  
 This captive quene; for gylteles of that yll,  
 Or any soche, I byde theise bitter bandes:  
 I oonly did pittic her myserye,  
 Enforc'd therto by wretched sympathye.

Well shewes the tyme in this [my] passion spente,  
 The will I had to ease her carefull mynde;  
 For I conveyed some letters which she sente,  
 To helpe her woo, to hurte myselfe I fynde.

Loo! here ye truthe, lett foes say what they will [can?];  
 Call this my faulte, my follic, or myshappe:  
 If my good quene have mercye on her man,  
 The tre shall lyve thoughte wounded be the sappe;

Whose harte is sounde, and never colde be wrought  
 By love, or hate, or hope of any gayne,  
 Of my good quene to thynke so evell a thoughte;  
 Whom God preserve an aged quene to be,  
 To Inglondes joye, betyde what maye of me.

## AN AUNSWERE TO THAT FIRST IS WRETIN.

Good ever due, destroyed w<sup>th</sup> p̄sent yll,  
 Showes ofte ill mente, though onse exprest amys;  
 No lief, forepaste in truthe and dutie still,  
 Can lycense faultes for w<sup>ch</sup> yor<sup>r</sup> trouble is.

O wretched they y<sup>t</sup> quyte soche princes soo!  
 But thus w<sup>th</sup> yow, O vaynest man! it frames;  
 For often well suche gwerdon here to showe,  
 And with oon yll deserve ten thousand blames.

Waile not yor<sup>r</sup> happ, whose happier sped had ben,  
 Synne and myshappe in faulte, not fate, dothe lie:  
 Both of good dedes wante of desertes therin,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> slielye lefte, to God and quene yow flie.  
 Mercie pforce to[o] craves for synnes unsene,  
 W<sup>ch</sup>, self unsene, ought moste offend our quene.

A heape of synnes well saide, confest to God,  
 Not well confest to hyde so great a mysse;  
 Not well receyv'd his due deserved rodde,  
 When graunted faulte to quene is only this:—

Yow did a perilous quene, to[o] fortunate,  
 More then advyse agaynste yor<sup>r</sup> prynces here,  
 By sufferyng slayte to daunger the estate  
 Of frynd by kynde, of quene, a neighbo<sup>r</sup> nere:

Whether, agaynst yo<sup>r</sup> owne true mistres will,  
Yow sowghte to steale out of her highnes hands  
That whylom quene, who, gilteles of y<sup>t</sup> yll,  
Or any soche, yow bid your bitter bandes,  
W<sup>ch</sup> rays'd yo<sup>r</sup> pitie of her myserye,  
The pange and purpose of yo<sup>r</sup> sympathye.

Well shewes yo<sup>r</sup> tyme in soch a passion spente,  
And thrall'd will to please her reching mynde;  
Letters convey'd, to daungerous intente,  
To helpe her luste, to hurte our quene we fynde.

Loo! here yo<sup>r</sup> truthe, now glose it as yow can.  
Call it yo<sup>r</sup> follie, fancie, or myshappe;  
If now yo<sup>r</sup> quene pitie her swarved man,  
The tre new graft may lyve with chang'd sap.

On head stocke no more to be so wroughte  
By love, or hate, or unjust hope of gayne,  
Agaynst her to pursue so fowle a thowghte,  
To wyne to perell of her lief or reigne;  
Whom god an aged quene make to remayne,  
Beyond her lief that made yow erre in vayne.

*Hic niger est, hunc tu Regina caveto.*



HEREAFTER FOLLOWITH AN EPITAPHE OF THE DEATHE OF THE VICOUNT  
HERRIFORDE.

When Vicount Herriford had ron his rase,  
And ended wer his dayes,  
Dame Fame stepte forth, and bad me wright  
Sum thinge unto his prayse;  
What man he was, what actes he did,  
What stock he was of com ;  
Whearunto I called for True Reporte,  
To give his rightfull dome.

A lorde by birthe, and of auncient blud,  
Lorde Ferres he was the same,  
Of the garter he was an auncient knight,  
Vycomte Herreforde create by name.  
Browght up and trayned [much] he was  
In warres beyond the seas,  
Called home agayne to serve his prynce,  
Whom still he sowght to please.

No serves was that he refused,  
No turneye did he shunne,  
Full many wer the noble dedes,  
This worthie man hathe done:  
In peace a lambe, in fild full ferce,  
A lyon at the nede ;  
In cowncell he was a Cato righte,  
And one of Hector's sede.

But as itche fruite, when it is ripe,  
Doth falle of his owne accorde,  
So cruell death w<sup>th</sup> grevous gripe  
Hath cawte this mightie lorde:  
And thoughe the grownd receyved hathe  
His corps into her wombe,  
His fame shall live and never die,  
Who lokes uppon his tombe.

For thoughe he be now dede in dede,  
Yet lyeth he here alyve,  
Whose actes and dedes so noble wer,  
No man can them deprive.

The people maye lament right sore  
This lordes deathe so sone;  
The heavens may reioyce the more  
That soche a jewell hath wonne.  
To allmightti God let us praye,  
Whiles we have tyme and space,  
That he the sowle of this worthie lorde  
Wolde lovingely imbrace.

---

THE SONGE OF THE RIGHT NOBLE EARLE WALTER ERLE OF ESSEX, BY  
HIM SONGE THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS DISCEACE, WHO DIED IN YEAR-  
LONDE YN SEPTEMBER, ANNO D'NI 1576.

O heavenly God ! O father dere !  
Caste downe thie tender eye  
Uppon a wretche that prostrate here  
Byfore thye throne doth lye.  
O, pore thie precyous oyle of grace,  
Into my wounded harte !  
O, lett the droppes of mercye swage  
The rigour of my smarte !

My synfull sowle, oppressed sore  
With carefull clog of synne,  
In humble sorte submyttith it self,  
Thye mercye for to wyne.  
Graunte mercye, then, O Saviour swete !  
To me, moste wooful thralle,  
Whose mornefull crye to thee alone  
Dothe still for mercye call.

Thie blessid will I have dispised  
Uppon a stubborne mynde,  
And to the swaye of worldly things  
My self I have inclyned :  
Forgetting heaven and heavenly powers,  
Whear God and saynts doth dwell,  
My lieff had like to trode the steppes  
That leades the waye to hell.

But, my dere Lorde and leadstone bright,  
I will no more do soo:  
To thynk uppon my fformer lyeff,  
My harte dothe melte for woo.  
Alas, I sythe, alas, I sobbe,  
Alas, I do repente,  
That ever my lycencyous will  
So wickedly was bente.

Sythe this, therefor, with irefull playnte  
Thie mercy I do crave,  
O Lorde! for thie great mercyes sake,  
Let me thy mercye have.  
Restore to lyef the wretched sowle  
That ells is like to die,  
So shall my voyce unto thie name  
Singe prayse eternallye.

Nowe blessed be the Father first,  
And blessed be the sonne,  
And blessed be the holy ghoste,  
By whom all things ar done:  
Blisse me, O blessid trinitytie!  
With thie eternall grace,  
That after deathe my sowle may have  
In heaven a dwelling place.

---

## THE ROBIN.

Of all the birdes that flyeth w<sup>th</sup> wynges  
The Robyn hath no pere,  
For he in filde and howse can singe  
And chante it all the yere:  
This Robyn is a pretye one,  
Well formed at poynte devise,  
A mynnion birde to loke uppon,  
And suer of worthye pryse.  
His lokes be brave, his voice full shrill,  
His fethers bravelye pruned,  
And all his members wrought at will,  
With notes full trymly tuned.

The crowe is black, the kite is dun,  
The chatteringe pie is pide,  
The sparrowe called Venus sonne,  
W<sup>th</sup> many mo beside,  
As dawes, [as] doves, and dottrell too,  
Can singe no kinde of note,  
Nor peacock that with taile can wo,  
Nor swanne w<sup>th</sup> his longe throte,  
Can make no myrthe, soche is their kynde,  
Wheras by night or daye,  
The Robyn doth delight the mynde,  
Above them all, I saye.

The gose but gaggelith in her gate,  
The cock he can but crowe,  
A thowsand birdes do not but prate,  
And gangell wheare they goo:



The larke and lynnett singith well,  
The thrissell dowe his best;  
The Robbyn beares away ye bell,  
And passeth all the rest.  
He is famyllyer with a lorde,  
And dreames wheare ladies are:  
He can in howse singe and recorde,  
When busshe and bryer is bare.

The nyghttingale will scarce be tame,  
No companye kepe he can;  
He dare not shewe his face for shame,  
He feareth the loke of man;  
But Robyn like a man can loke,  
And dothe shunne no place;  
He will synge in every noke,  
And stare yow in the face.  
He takith bred upon the borde,  
And then awaye he goes;  
Wherfore, to tell [you] at a worde,  
His noble kynde he showes.

How straunge of nature everye waye  
Are diverse birdes indede:  
The Robyn in a wynter's daye  
Will playe with yow for nede.  
Whylles other birdes abrode wilbe,  
In froste and snowe to[o] badd',  
Into the chamber will he flie,  
Wheare pleasure maye be had  
Amongest the dames, whose nature is  
To pittie thinges distreste:  
The Robyn is in heaven's blisse  
When some have lytell reste.

They are but wodcokes that do frowne,  
 At Robbyn's happe soo good:  
 He hurtes no birde in fild or town,  
 In forest, ne in wodde.  
 Although he hoppes from beame to bawlke,  
 And hoppes abowte the bedd,  
 When pecocks prowde abowt do walke  
 With hartes as colde as leade.  
 Yet Robyn deserves prayse therfore,  
 If he his merittes have,  
 That from the froste and wynter sore  
 His fethers so can save.

Nowe, Robbyn, rattle forthe thye songe,  
 And make thy wordes to rynge:  
 I praye to God thow prosper longe,  
 And all that so can synge.  
 Fie on all folishe dasterdly birdes,  
 That singe with cowardes voice!  
 They may be likened unto owles,  
 Whiche no wheare can rejoyse.  
 As I have saied, so saye I still,  
 The Robbyn passith all  
 That ever sange so at [his] will  
 Amongest us, greate or smalle.

## VERSES MADE IN THE WORTHIE COMENDAC'ON OF THE QUENES MAIESTIE.

Yow men y<sup>t</sup> read the memoryes  
Of wonders done and paste,  
Remember well the historys  
Of women first and laste ;  
And tell me if I saye not true,  
That women can do more then yow,  
And more then any man can doo,  
So quyecklie and so trym. [fast?]  
What counterpoyntes of pollycie,  
Of arte, and of artyfycie,  
But women w<sup>th</sup> facylitie  
Can compas and forecaste.

How longe wer men with akornes fed,  
Of old tyme long agoo,  
Till Ceres put into their heades  
Their grownde to care and sowe.  
She tawght them how to brue and bake,  
And of ther corne good breade to make ;  
Or ells did Epha all mystake,  
Who wrightith to be soo :  
Erechyell she did devise  
To spyne, and carde, and exercise  
The use of yerne in sundry wyse,  
As now good profe dothe shewe.

Pentissillia she did devise  
 The ax whearwith yow hewe ;  
 Tritonia for waxe [verse?] so wyse,  
 As syns ther wer but fewe:  
 Semerima for shippyng trade,  
 Devised the first that ever was made,  
 As Plynnye in his boke hathe saide,  
 Who wrightith to be soo.  
 And then com to paynter's skill,  
 Erema had her hande at will;  
 Selyma w<sup>th</sup> wevors quyll  
 Wrought still devyses newe.

And for the mery musick, then,  
 Melpomene she did passe,  
 As oon that first of all beganne,  
 To fynde what connyng was:  
 Trixsecora cold so invente  
 To stryng and tune the instrumente,  
 As moved the very fymament,  
 I thinke, whiles her tyme was;  
 Aud for a voyce excellynge hye  
 The dawghter of Cananatie,  
 As wrytten bokes doo testyfie,  
 Thorowghout the worlde did passe.

And for the spyrit of profecye  
 Debora had the gyfte;  
 And Judith in her juperdie  
 Did make excellynge shyfte.  
 Correna for her poyetrye  
 With honor did God worshipp hie,  
 As storis written testyfie,  
 Her sences they wer swyfte.

And cum then to phylosophye,  
 Thear hathe ben soche a companye,  
 As Susan, Ruthe, and Eugeny;  
 I nede no more to sifte.

Amasia was an oratrix,  
 In learyng did excell,  
 And pleded cawses more than six  
 In Rome, whear she did dwell:  
 Hispacia was right eloquente;  
 Ortensia was eccellente;  
 Camelia colde best invente,  
 With those that beare the bell.  
 Of theise and many wonders mo,  
 Yow men, your selves your prayses show,  
 Of theise and many thowsands mo,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> semythe to excelle.

Syns theise and many historis  
 Ar written of by men,  
 Of dyuerse kyndes of properties  
 By dyverse women then,  
 I praye what end such happ sholde fall,  
 I knowe oone suche doth pas them all  
 That ever was, or ever shall,

And they wer all alyve agayne.  
 I praye what prayse deservyth she  
 If in our Courte her highnes be?  
 Well, you shall know no more of me:  
 God save her life! Amen.

FINIS.





